

world power. It is a solemn moment for the American democracy. For with this primacy in power is joined an awe-inspiring accountability to the future. As you look around you, you must feel not only the sense of duty done, but also you must feel anxiety lest you fall below the level of achievement. Opportunity is here now, clear and shining * * * To reject it or ignore it or fritter it away will bring us all the long reproaches of the aftertime."

Madam President, Churchill's words are America's words. For ours is a passionate belief in human possibility, an abiding devotion to freedom. "Opportunity is here now, clear and shining." Let us not trade liberty for the false idol of foreign commerce. Let us not allow freedom's song to die on our lips. "For all sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are these: 'It might have been.'"

I yield the floor.

BALANCED BUDGET ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. DOMENICI. Madam President, parliamentary inquiry: How much time has been used by each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico has 7 hours and 19 minutes left on his side, and the Senator from New Jersey has 9 hours and 14 minutes remaining.

Mr. DOMENICI. I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask that it be charged equally to both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, do I understand that under the procedure now in effect we can lay down amendments this afternoon? Is that the case?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is a pending amendment that would have to be laid aside.

Mr. HARKIN. And that would have to be done by unanimous consent, right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I have an amendment. I know the Senator from Arkansas wants to speak, and I will be as brief as I can.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. HARKIN. I would like to speak very briefly and lay down the amendment.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Will the Senator yield for just a moment?

Mr. HARKIN. Yes.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. In this case I think there is a question about whether the Senator from Arkansas had a commitment to speak at this time.

I would ask the Senator from Arkansas how much time he needed.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. I intend to speak about 15 minutes.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. About 15 minutes. Apparently the Senator from Iowa would be all right if the Senator from Arkansas—it had been apparently agreed to before he came.

Mr. HARKIN. I didn't know such an agreement was in effect. That would be fine.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I apologize to the Senator from Arkansas for messing things up.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, since I still have the floor, if I might, this Senator was unaware that a previous agreement had been made by the Senator from Arkansas for this time slot. What I would ask is that when the Senator from Arkansas finishes, then I would be recognized to make my statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I understand that the time is going to be yielded by that side of the aisle and should be appropriately recorded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is correct.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I express my gratitude to the Senator from Iowa for being so understanding, allowing me to proceed. I would like for it to be clear that my 15 minutes would come from the majority's time.

MOST-FAVORED-NATION TRADE STATUS FOR CHINA

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, the House of Representatives votes tomorrow on whether or not to extend most-favored-nation trade status to China. In a more desirable world, revoking China's MFN status might be less advisable than handling national security and human rights as well as economic issues in more traditional ways. Unfortunately, the experience of the last 3 or 4 years, in fact experience going back much farther than that, has demonstrated that the administration's policy of constructive engagement has failed. The constructive engagement policy has in fact degenerated. We have seen conditions in China worsened annually.

The logic behind constructive engagement is, indeed, appealing. It goes something like this. If we will expand trade with China, the result will inevitably be political liberalization and ultimately an improvement in the conditions of the Chinese people, there will be an expansion of human rights opportunities, there will be less repression, there will be less religious persecution, there will be a warmer and more cordial relationship between China and the United States.

When I was first confronted with the issue of MFN upon my election to Con-

gress in 1993, I was almost persuaded by that logic. In fact, I wanted to be persuaded by that logic, and I was looking for any indication that the policy of constructive engagement was, in fact, having the desired results and that, in fact, conditions were improving, treatment of the Chinese people had improved, there was less repression, and that trade, expanded trade, was in fact having that kind of result. Had there been any sign in the last 4 years that this policy of constructive engagement was having the intended result, I would be voting for MFN this year. Were I given the opportunity, I would be supporting most-favored-nation trade status for China.

But the facts are very clear and the State Department's own report makes it abundantly clear that conditions have deteriorated, that the policy of linkage has not had the result that we all wanted it to have. So it is argued that economic freedom frequently leads to political freedom, and in fact it does frequently lead to political freedom. There are examples in which that has happened. But in China's case, market economics has become nothing but an utilitarian exercise to ensure the continuation of a totalitarian regime. They have seen if they keep the iron grip upon the Chinese people, that a market economy will help them accomplish that; that expanded trade, higher incomes, economic opportunities for Chinese people—that makes it easier for them to maintain an absolute repression of any kind of free expression within China.

Proponents of MFN say we all have the same goal, expanded human rights, we just have a different approach on how we best attain that. Russia is often pointed to, the old Soviet Union, where there was a little hole in the dike called perestroika and from that little hole in the dike the floodgates opened and freedom could not be contained. But in China, perhaps they learned the lesson from the Russian experiment or from the Soviet Union's experience, for in China there has been no perestroika; there has been only repression.

There are, I believe, many flaws in the policy of constructive engagement. First and foremost, it has simply not improved the status of the Chinese people; it has worsened it. The administration's decision not to consider human rights abuses when granting MFN status has proven disastrous for the people of China. As they have been removed from the threat of any repercussions in the trade relationship with the United States, the Chinese Communist leaders have succeeded in jailing or executing every last dissident in a country of over 1 billion people, according to the State Department's own 1996 China report. As we have turned a blind eye, the atrocities have escalated and the oppressive government has strengthened its hold on a full one-fifth of the world's population. The constructive engagement policy has produced more persecutions of Christians,